

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

45 FREMONT, SUITE 2000
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94105-2219
VOICE (415) 904-5200
FAX (415) 904-5400
TDD (415) 597-5885



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For More Information contact:

Judi Shils, Coastal Cleanup Day Media, (415) 378-0504 cell

Eben Schwartz, Outreach Manager, California Coastal Commission, (415) 904-5210 or (415) 816-2506

California Coastal Cleanup Day
Presented by the California Coastal Commission and Whole Foods Market

Results with 65% of cleanup sites reporting

California Finds a Silver Lining at the 25TH Annual California Coastal Cleanup Day

(*San Francisco*) California's beaches and inner waterways may be collecting spots for marine debris, but Californians have demonstrated their support for clean beaches by turning out by the tens of thousands at the 25th Annual California Coastal Cleanup Day. They scoured beaches, shorelines, and inland locations, picking up trash and debris this morning, covering over 800 sites and gathering hundreds of tons of trash. These volunteers took part in the California Coastal Commission's 25TH Annual California Coastal Cleanup Day presented by Whole Foods Market, part of the International Coastal Cleanup organized by The Ocean Conservancy. Beach, inland waterway, and community cleanups took place up and down the California coast, from Mexico to the Oregon border, around San Francisco Bay, and at sites as far inland as Lake Tahoe and the Salton Sea.

With 65% of the cleanup sites reporting,
the statewide count stands at 66,550 volunteers,
which should approach the event goal of 70,000 volunteers.

Those volunteers picked up 819,394 pounds of trash
and an additional 89,899 pounds of recyclable materials,
for a total of 909,294 pounds.

The Coastal Commission expects to exceed 1,000,000 pounds of trash when all the totals are in.

Past Coastal Cleanup Day data tell us that most (between 60-80 percent) of the debris on our beaches and shorelines comes from inland sources, traveling through storm drains or creeks out to the beaches and ocean. Rain—or even something as simple as hosing down a sidewalk—can wash cigarette butts, bits of styrofoam, pesticides, and oil into the storm drains and out to the ocean. The California Coastal Commission is asking all Californians to take responsibility for making sure trash goes where it belongs—securely in a trashcan, recycling bin, or a hazardous waste dump when appropriate.

As occurs every year, some unusual items were found throughout California. The Winners of the *2009 Most Unusual Item contest* are:

Coastal California: A volunteer in Marin found 10 single shoes, none of which matched.

Inland California: A volunteer along a creek in Yolo County found a grand piano.

The Coastal Commission will award \$50 gift certificates to each volunteer who found the unusual items along the coast and in inland California.

For the past five years, California Coastal Cleanup Day has shown steady growth in both volunteer and debris totals, and the initial results from 2009 look to continue this trend. "Our efforts this year were helped tremendously by our partnership with Whole Foods Market and their summer-long effort to help publicize the Cleanup," said Eben Schwartz, Coastal Cleanup Day Director for the California Coastal Commission. "Along with our sponsors, the Cleanup is really run by the hundreds of volunteers, non-profit groups, and local government agencies that make up the heart and soul of the effort. Our cooperation this year is unprecedented, and we're seeing the results in the statewide turnout."

Results from last year: In 2008, 73,461 volunteers picked up over 1.6 million pounds of trash and recyclables statewide on Coastal Cleanup Day, the largest cleanup in the event's history. 40 percent of all debris items picked up were cigarette butts - volunteers picked up over 340,000 of them in only three hours last year. This was the 24th straight year in which cigarette butts were the most numerous debris item picked up.

Those who were unable to make it to the beach for Coastal Cleanup Day can still participate in COASTWEEKS, a three-week celebration of our coastal resources that takes place across the United States. The Coastal Commission has a calendar of COASTWEEKS events on its website. Volunteers are encouraged to contact the California Coastal Commission for more information about COASTWEEKS. To get involved with COASTWEEKS, or to find out how you can become a Coastal Steward throughout the year, please contact the Commission at (800) COAST-4U or visit our Web site at www.coast4u.org.

The statewide event is presented by the California Coastal Commission and Whole Foods Market® with major statewide support from Crystal Geyser, Oracle, and Kohl's. Additional support comes from Delta, Sunset Magazine, Nature's Path, and Aquarium of the Bay. Other sponsors include KPMG, See's Candies, Fairmont Hotels & Resorts, and Whole Foods Market vendor Natracare.

Northern California media sponsors include partner KFOG Radio and KPIX/CW Bay Area TV. Northern California media support also comes from the San Francisco Department of the Environment, Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy, and the Marin County Board of Supervisors.

Southern California media sponsors include KCAL-TV and KCBS-TV.

California Coastal Cleanup Day 2009 is supported by the California Coastal Commission, California State Parks Foundation, and the Ocean Conservancy. This event is made possible by the hard work of hundreds of local non-profits and government agencies throughout the state and tens of thousands of volunteers annually.

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